

Help Increase the Peace (HIP) — for Teachers

For anyone working with young people, this would be a great opportunity to build your skills in facilitation and add new ideas and experiential learning techniques to your already strong experience. Get a taste for the workshop style, and, if you think it is for you, or for your students, we can discuss this more.

HIP workshops are run in many schools across Australia, with designated days of training for students about how to manage conflict and disagreements in different ways. It is based on the well regarded Alternatives to Violence Project (AVP). The workshop was created in 1975 and has been developing ever since. It is facilitated to thousands of people in over 50 countries from judges to teachers, students and counsellors, parents and children.

AVP facilitators have conducted HIP workshops around Australia:

with IN-SYNCH, Anglicare Southern Queensland
<http://www.anglicaresq.org.au/2012/05/anglicare-southern-queensland-recognised-for-anti-violence-program/>

through schools in WA, accredited as a part of the 'Endorsed Program' under the Personal Development category of the Curriculum Council of Western Australian
<http://avpwa.org/projects/avp-youth/>

through schools and at TAFE in NSW, with nationally accredited communication modules that are included in a variety of technical education courses and also taught as stand-alone courses across Australian TAFEs. Since 1993, a behavioural team of 12 special education teachers, who support students-at-risk with dysfunctional behaviour and emotional problems in 40 inner city schools in Sydney, were trained as AVP/HIP facilitators and have since run an average of 75 workshops per year. Over this time, they have tailored the workshops to cater to:

- ✓ Individual students-at-risk: participating with a group of age peers
- ✓ Class year programs: all students in a class year participate in a HIP Basic with some progressing to Advanced, T4F and co-facilitation. School culture and behaviour have changed dramatically
- ✓ Entire school: all teachers are trained in AVP/HIP and Restorative Practice. HIP learning styles and content are embedded in the learning process. Rozelle Public School has become a model of excellence
- ✓ Teacher training in circle learning: teaching using the HIP learning style.

The HIP Youth Peace Leadership project, also known as Peaceful Pathways is a set of three workshops: Basic, Advanced and Training for Facilitators. Each workshop is usually run over three days and is appropriate for students between Year 7 and Year 12.

The workshops use an experiential training model to teach creative conflict resolution to young people. The basic elements of building community and teaching communication skills for resolving conflict non-violently are always there. Underneath are the elements of affirmation for self-esteem, accepting differences of race, class and gender, and developing leadership.

In most workshops, a team of adults and young people provide the facilitation for a group of youth. This aspect of leadership development and empowerment of youth is a crucial element of the project.

The workshops engage a mix of experienced AVP facilitators who have delivered numerous workshops as well as 'learner' facilitators. Learner facilitators have completed three levels of workshop including facilitation training, and are given support and guidance to deliver selected activities.

Workshops use interactive exercises, games and role play to step by step:

- understand yourself, believe in yourself and respect others
- work together, build trust and relationships
- communicate well, actively listen and speak in difficult situations
- manage strong feelings such as anger and fear
- understand why conflict happens, and how to solve problems.

Many participants say they are surprised at how much fun it is to learn in a different way through activity and experience. Participants have said that they use this experience to do things differently in their lives particularly with regard to school-based conflicts and within family.

This is what they say:

It genuinely feels like it is run by the students. Lots of programs make the claim and talk about being student led ... but it's not (when) the facilitators do it, students are mouth pieces.

Now at home, when my brother hits me, I think before I act and I am able to walk away.

I have seen some really wonderful changes in the students I work with since they participated in the workshops. There is one girl who has done the workshops before, and she is having problems at school with another student. She came to me and pulled out the card with the keys on it and said "I've tried this key and this key and this one, but it is still not working. Please help me." This shows that she has been working through all the keys to try to find a peaceful solution and now she is asking for help from outside.

Faced big stuff at school in the past. Now I feel I can handle it better.

Learnt how to control my anger. I would usually shout or hit at others now after the workshop I have learnt to think before I react.

Changed through the workshop, I built my confidence.

I was nicer to people, and my 'self thought' opened up.

It was really fun! I think everyone enjoyed it – everyone spoke up and gave their opinions!

Care for others - I have been really caring more for my brothers and sisters and my mum too. I feel that I have started to care more for my family after the workshop, it helped me to think about getting along.